

Message Text

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PAGE 01 MOSCOW 10780 161228Z
ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ARA-10 ISO-00 SOE-02 AID-05 CEA-01 CIAE-00
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FM AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1732
INFO AMEMBASSY BELGRADE
AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST
AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST
USINT HAVANA
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AMEMBASSY SOFIA
USMISSION USBERLIN
USMISSION USNATO
AMEMBASSY WARSAW
USDOE WASHDC
USDOC WASHDC

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E.O.11652:N/A
TAGS:ENRG, COMECON, UR
SUBJECT:ORENBURG GAS PIPELINE

1. ACCORDING TO ARTICLE IN EKONOMICHESKAYA GAZETA NO. 20
ON ACTIVITIES OF THE INTERNATIONAL INVESTMENT BANK, IN
1977 TOTAL LENGTH OF WELDED PIPELINE IN CONNECTION WITH
ORENBURG REACHED 2,547 KILOMETERS. ARTICLE REAFFIRMS THAT
PIPELINE WILL BECOME OPERATIVE THIS YEAR, BUT IN SPEAKING
OF 15.5 BILLION CUBIC METERS WHICH CEMA COUNTRIES WILL
RECEIVE ANNUALLY THROUGH PIPELINE, NO SPECIFIC DATE FOR
ATTAINING THIS IS MENTIONED. WE NOTE, HOWEVER, THAT IN
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INTERVIEW APPEARING IN NOVOYE VREMYA NO. 52 OF DECEMBER
23, 1977, A. (. LALAYANTS, A DEPUTY CHAIRMAN OF GOSPLAN,
STATES THAT ORENBURG GAS PIPELINE WILL SUPPLY AROUND 8
BILLION CUBIC METERS OF GAS TO CEMA COUNTRIES IN 1979 AND
THE FULL 15.5 BILLION CUBIC METERS IN 1980.

2. COMMENT: IT IS SURPRISING TO SEE HIGH FIGURE FOR

LENGTH OF PIPELINE REACHED IN 1977. IF THIS REFERS ONLY TO THE MAIN PIPELINE, IT WOULD MEAN THAT ONLY SOME 200 KILOMETERS REMAIN TO BE PUT IN PLACE IN 1978. WE ARE UNDER THE IMPRESSION THAT MORE THAN THIS REMAINS TO BE DONE IN THE DIFFICULT CARPATHIAN STRETCH OF THE PIPELINE. PERHAPS FIGURE GIVEN ABOVE ALSO REFERS TO SECONDARY PIPELINES CONNECTING TO THE MAIN ORENBURG LINE. FOR INSTANCE, IT IS OUR UNDERSTANDING THAT A PIPELINE IS TO BE BUILT CONNECTING THE MAIN ORENBURG-WESTERN BORDER LINE WITH THE BULGARIAN AND ROMANIAN SYSTEMS. ALTHOUGH WE ARE UNAWARE OF PROGRESS ON THIS PARTICULAR LINE, IT MAY BE THAT SOME OF THIS WORK IS INCLUDED IN ABOVE TOTAL.

3. THE FIGURE GIVEN BY LALAYANTS REMAINS THE ONLY DEFINITE FIGURE WE HAVE SEEN FOR DELIVERIES IN 1979. SOVIET AND EAST EUROPEAN CONTACTS SEEMINGLY HAVE BEEN UNSURE HOW MUCH GAS WAS TO BE PUMPED THROUGH THE LINE NEXT YEAR. ASSUMING THAT THE 1979 TARGET IS ACHIEVED, IT IS STILL NOT CLEAR WHETHER DISTRIBUTION WILL BE APPORTIONED ACCORDING TO FORMULA FOR DISTRIBUTION OF THE FULL AMOUNT. TOON

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